

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 158

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: PARM - ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT - PART I

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

REF: A) CERP 0001

B) STATE 038338

C) STATE 038356

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A. U.S. INTERESTS - PRINCIPAL U.S. INTERESTS IN SEYCHELLES OVER THE
NEXT SEVERAL YEARS WILL BE CENTERED IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY/
STRATEGIC AREAS. I FEEL THESE INCLUDE:

- 1) CONTINUED SEYCHELLES' RECEPTIVITY TO PRESENCE OF USAF SATELLITE
TRACKING STATION ON MAHE.
- 2) CONTINUED ACCESS TO PORT VICTORIA FR USN WARSHIPS IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN.
- 3) AUTHORIZATION FOR ROUTINE OPERATIONAL UTILIZATION OF SEYCHELLES
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BY U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT.

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- 4) ADOPTION BY SEYCHELLES OF NON-IDEOLOGICAL AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH
TO INTERNATIONAL ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO U.S.
- 5) PURSUIT BY SEYCHELLES OF MODERATING ROLE IN THIRD WORLD COUNCILS.
- 6) EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. FIRMS IN HIGH TECHNOLOGY FIELDS,
INCLUDING AVIATION.

B. OVERVIEW - SEYCHELLES, WHICH IS COMPOSED OF 92 ISLANDS SPREAD

OVER 400,000 SQUARE MILES AND HAS A POPULATION OF 60,000 AND PER CAPITA GNP OF U.S. DOLS. 650, ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE IN JUNE, 1976 AFTER 162 YEARS OF BRITISH COLONIAL RULE. THE INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT IS A COALITION COMPOSED OF LEADERS OF THE TWO FORMER RIVAL POLITICAL PARTIES. IN THE INITIAL POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD, SEYCHELLES HAS ACHIEVED A HIGH DEGREE OF POLITICAL STABILITY, EXPERIENCED AN EXCELLENT RATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH (ESPECIALLY IN TOURISM) AND ADOPTED A PRAGMATIC AND BALANCED APPROACH IN ITS EXTERNAL RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH SEYCHELLES IS OFFICIALLY NON-ALIGNED, GOVERNMENT POLICIES HAVE BEEN SUPPORTIVE OF U.S. INTERESTS IN SEYCHELLES AND INDIAN OCEAN AREA. POSITIVE EXPERIENCE OF FIRST NINE MONTHS OF INDEPENDENCE IS ATTRIBUTABLE IN LARGE PART OF SALUBRIOUS COLONIAL EXPERIENCE AND PERSONAL CONTROL OVER FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXERCISED BY SEYCHELLES' WESTERN-ORIENTED PRESIDENT, JAMES MANCHAM. USAF SATELLITE TRACKING STATION, WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1964, CONTINUES TO BE WELL RECEIVED BY GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL COMMUNITY. TEN YEARS RENTAL AGREEMENT (TALLING U.S. DOLS. 8.9 MILLION) WAS SIGNED IN JUNE 1976 WITH PROVISION FOR HIGHEST RENT PAYMENTS DURING FIRST TWO YEARS. CONCEIVABLY OVER MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM, HOWEVER, POSITION OF TRACKING STATION MAY BECOME LESS SECURE. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRC EMBASSY AND PROSPECTIVE PRESENCE IN NEAR FUTURE OF SOVIET MISSION MAY RESULT IN DIPLOMATIC EFFORT TO PERSUADE GOS TO WITHDRAW PRESENT ACCEPTANCE OF STATION IN A PERIOD WHEN REDUCED RENT PAYMENTS (AND/OR OTHER SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE) COULD RENDER STATION LESS DESIRABLE TO SEYCHELLES. SEYCHELLES HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY RECEPTIVE TO ALL REQUESTS FOR DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE FOR VISITS BY MIDEASFOR OR SEVENTH FLEET USN WARSHIPS (INCLUDING VISITS BY NUCLEAR POWERED VESSELS). GOS HAS ALSO GRANTED ALL REQUESTS FOR UTILIZATION OF SEYCHELLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BY U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT AND HAS RECENTLY AGREED TO ROUTINE OPERATIONAL

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VISITS BY USN P-3 MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT. WHILE IT IS UNLIKELY THAT SEYCHELLES, UNDER PRESENT OR ANY IDENTIFIABLE SUCCESSOR REGIME, WOULD ADOPT NEGATIVE POSITION TOWARD USN SHIP VISITS, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT GOVERNMENT, GIVEN NON-ALIGNED POSTURE, WOULD FEEL OBLIGED IN THE FUTURE TO APPROVE AT LEAST SOME VISIT REQUESTS FOR VESSELS FROM COMMUNIST STATES. SINCE INDEPENDENCE SEYCHELLES HAS BECOME MEMBER OF UN, COMMONWEALTH, OAU, NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND OCAM WHILE GENERALLY MAINTAINING A LOW POLITICAL PROFILE AND TAKING NON-COMMITTAL STANCE ON SPECIFIC ISSUES. IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESSES BEFORE UNGA, OCAM AND UNESCO, PRESIDENT MANCHAM EMPHASIZED PRACTICAL AND PEACEFUL APPROACH TOWARD RESOLUTION OF CONTENTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING SOUTHERN AFRICA. OVER NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, SEYCHLLES SHOULD BECOME AN INCREASINGLY ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA WHERE CAN BE EXPECTED TO PLAY A MODERATING ROLE.

C. OBJECTIVES, COURSES OF ACTION AND ISSUES - U.S. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN SEYCHELLES SHOULD REFLECT THE PARAMOUNT OBJECTIVE OF MAINTAINING A MODERATE, WESTERN-ORIENTED GOVERNMENT SUPPORTIVE OF

U.S. INTERESTS IN THIS STRATEGICALLY SITUATED ISLAND NATION. OUR SUBSTANTIAL AND GROWING INTERESTS ARE BEST SERVED BY USG GIVING MORAL ENCOURAGEMENT AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, MATERIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE FLEDGLING NATION AS IT STRIVES TO RAISE LOCAL LIVING STANDARDS AND MEET RISING EXPECTATIONS IN POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA. CURRENT U.S. BILATERAL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE FUNDED AT PRESENT LEVELS OR EXPANDED MODESTLY SHOULD NEED OR ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY INCREASE. THE U.S. PRESENTLY RECEIVES GOVERNMENTAL AND PUBLIC APPRECIATION FOR OUR PROGRAMS (PL-480 TITLE II, PEACE CORPS, SELF-HELP AND CU) XZR OUT OF PROPORTION TO THE RESOURCES EXPENDED. A MODEST DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PRTRRAM, TO INCLUDE ESPECIALLY FIELD OF LOW COST HOUSINGBM WOULD ACHIEVE VERY GREAT IMPACT ON SEYCHELLES' SMALL POPULATION AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN PRESENT EXCELLENT STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. CONSIDERATION SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR AN INEXPENSIVE, POST ADMINISTERED INFORMATION/CULTURAL PROGRAM UTILIZING SPACE AVAILABLE IN NEW CHANCERY. THE CU IV PROGRAM SHOULD ALSO BE SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED FROM FY77 LEVELS TO PERMIT NEW

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GENERATION OF SEYCHELLES' LEADERS TO GAIN FIRST-HAND UNDERSTANDING OF AND APPRECIATION FOR U.S. USG COMMITMENT OF MODEST RESOURCES WILL DEMONSTRATE U.S. SUPPORT FOR SEYCHELLES' DEVELOPMENT IN CRITICAL IMMEDIATE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD AND SOLIDIFY FAVORABLE POSITION U.S. NOW ENJOYS IN COUNTRY WHOSE CURRENT AND LONG-RANGE IMPORTANCE TO U.S. INTERESTS FAR EY EEDS ITS SMALL SIZE AND POPULATION.

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